

CAPSULE SUMMARY

~~BA-1067~~ BA-1070

404 Railroad Avenue

East Towson, Baltimore County

Circa 1900

Private

The dwelling at 404 Railroad Avenue was constructed circa 1900 in the East Towson neighborhood of Baltimore County. The history of East Towson dates from the purchase of one-and-a-quarter acres of land by Daniel Harris in September 1853. This is believed to be the first documented African-American landholding in Towson, and is among the oldest such ethnic enclave in Baltimore County. Further, manumitted slaves and/or descendents of former slaves, many of who were owned by Charles Ridgely, populated the neighborhood. Hampered by the low economic status of the residents, development in the 19th century was slow, increasing after the turn of the 20th century. The setting of the property, building styles, and construction materials were guided by the limited economic status of the residents and their desire to establish a neighborhood of their own without the assistance of white architects, builders, and craftsmen. By 1927, the community was ninety-five percent improved with single-family dwellings, social buildings, a school, and religious structures.

Fronting west, this property is sited on a small level grassy lot on Railroad Avenue facing a large power plant. The house fronts close to the road and is surrounded by mature trees and overgrown shrubs. This vernacular dwelling is two stories in height and three bays wide with a front gable roof and two center-interior parged brick chimneys. This wood frame dwelling sits on a solid pebble stone foundation and is clad with coursed wood shingles. The side passage single-leaf flush wood door has a 1-light transom and is covered with a pent roof. The first story windows are elongated 2/2 double-hung wood sashes. The second-story contains three 1/1 double-hung wood sash windows. The roof is sheathed with asphalt shingles and features overhanging eaves, and a boxed cornice encased in aluminum siding.

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

BA-1070
Inventory No. BA-1067

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic

other

2. Location

street and number 404 Railroad Avenue not for publication

city, town Baltimore vicinity

county Baltimore County

3. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Not Available

street and number Not Available telephone Not Available

city, town Not Available state zip code

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Baltimore County Courthouse liber unknown folio unknown

city, town Towson tax map unknown 70A tax parcel 592 unknown tax ID number

5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- ☐ Contributing Resource in National Register District
- ☐ Contributing Resource in Local Historic District
- ☐ Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
- ☐ Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
- ☐ Recorded by HABS/HAER
- ☐ Historic Structure Report or Research Report at MHT
- ☐ Other: _____

6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function	Resource Count
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	Contributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> defense	<input type="checkbox"/> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> domestic	<input type="checkbox"/> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> structures
		<input type="checkbox"/> funerary	<input type="checkbox"/> objects
		<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> Total
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care	
		<input type="checkbox"/> industry	
		<input type="checkbox"/> landscape	
		<input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture	
		<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
		<input type="checkbox"/> social	
		<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
		<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	
		<input type="checkbox"/> unknown	
		<input type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use	
		<input type="checkbox"/> other:	

Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory

1

7. Description

Inventory No. BA-1067

Condition

<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> altered

Prepare both a one paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

Fronting west, this property is sited on a small level grassy lot on Railroad Avenue facing a large power plant. The house fronts close to the road and is surrounded by mature trees and overgrown shrubs. This vernacular dwelling is two stories in height and three bays wide with a front gable roof and two center-interior parged brick chimneys. This wood frame dwelling sits on a solid pebble stone foundation and is clad with coursed wood shingles. The side passage single-leaf flush wood door has a 1-light transom and is covered with a pent roof. The first story windows are elongated 2/2 double-hung wood sashes. The second-story contains three 1/1 double-hung wood sash windows. The roof is sheathed with asphalt shingles and features overhanging eaves, and a boxed cornice encased in aluminum siding.

8. Significance

Inventory No. BA-1067

Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> performing arts	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/ recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science	
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/ settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> social history	
	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning		<input type="checkbox"/> maritime history	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation		<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:	

Specific dates 1900 ca.

Architect/Builder Unknown

Construction dates 1900 ca.

Evaluation for:

☐ National Register☐ Maryland Register☒ not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance projects, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

The house at 404 Railroad Avenue was constructed circa 1900 in the East Towson neighborhood of Baltimore County. East Towson is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history, specifically the pre-Civil War development of an African-American neighborhood in a predominately white community. The history of this property dates from the purchase of one-and-a-quarter acres of land by Daniel Harris in September 1853. This is believed to be the first documented African-American landholding in Towson, and is among the oldest such ethnic enclave in Baltimore County. Further, manumitted slaves and/or descendents of former slaves, many of who were owned by Charles Ridgely, populated the neighborhood. Hampered by the low economic status of the residents, development in the 19th century was slow, increasing after the turn of the 20th century. The setting of the property, building styles, and construction materials were guided by the limited economic status of the residents and their desire to establish a neighborhood of their own without the assistance of white architects, builders, and craftsmen. By 1927, the community was ninety-five percent improved with single-family dwellings, social buildings, a school, and religious structures. Many of the current homeowners and tenants living in the neighborhood are descendents of the first African-American residents.

East Towson as a whole is representative of an important phase of architectural development in Baltimore County, illustrating the dilution of popular architectural styles to more efficiently meet the needs of the neighborhood, and the builders' untrained abilities to execute the fashionable ornamentation. Thus, East Towson provided lower cost housing in a more suburban neighborhood, rather than the urban setting their economic status typically perpetuated.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. BA-1067

Atlas of Baltimore County, Maryland. Philadelphia, PA: G. M. Hopkins, 1877.

Baltimore County Historic Inventory.

Brooks, Neal A. and Eric G. Rockel. *A History of Baltimore County.* Towson, MD: Friends of the Towson Library, Inc., 1979.

Map of Baltimore County. Philadelphia, PA: G. W. Bromley, 1915.

Scharf, J. Thomas. *History of Baltimore City and County From the Earliest Period to the Present Day: Including Biographical Sketches of Their Representative Men.* Philadelphia, PA: Louis H. Everts, 1881. Reprinted by Higginson Book Company, Salem, MA.

Sidney, J. C. *Map of the City and County of Baltimore, Maryland, from Original Surveys.* Baltimore, MD: James M. Stephens, 1850.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property Unknown

Acreage of historical setting Unknown

Quadrangle name Towson

Quadrangle scale: 1:24,000

Verbal boundary description and justification

The house is located at 404 Pennsylvania Avenue in East Towson in the Ninth District of Baltimore County.

11. Form Prepared by

name/title	K. Baynard, R. Weidlich, J. Bunting, Architectural Historians		
organization	EHT Traceries, Incorporated	date	January 2, 2001
street & number	1121 5th Street NW	telephone	202.393.1199
city or town	Washington	state	DC

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
DHCD/DHCP
100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023
410-514-7600

BA-1070



Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation
BALTIMORE COUNTY
Real Property Data Search (2007 vw1.1)

[Go Back](#)
[View Map](#)
[New Search](#)

Account Identifier: District - 09 **Account Number -** 2400008635

Owner Information

Owner Name: COCKRELL LAURAMAE **Use:** RESIDENTIAL
Principal Residence: YES
Mailing Address: 404 RAILROAD AVE **Deed Reference:** 1) /23474/ 177
 BALTIMORE MD 21218-5303 2)

Location & Structure Information

Premises Address **Legal Description**
 404 RAILROAD AVE .083 AC
 SES RAILROAD AVE
 220FT SE PENNA AVE

Map	Grid	Parcel	Sub District	Subdivision	Section	Block	Lot	Assessment Area	Plat No:
70A	24	592						2	Plat Ref:

Special Tax Areas **Town**
Ad Valorem
Tax Class

Primary Structure Built	Enclosed Area	Property Land Area	County Use
2006	1,656 SF	3,615.00 SF	04

Stories	Basement	Type	Exterior
2	YES	END UNIT	SIDING

Value Information

	Base Value	Value	Phase-in Assessments		
		As Of	As Of	As Of	
		01/01/2008	07/01/2008	07/01/2009	
Land	41,500	119,500			
Improvements:	172,870	179,130			
Total:	214,370	298,630	242,456	270,542	
Preferential Land:	0	0	0	0	

Transfer Information

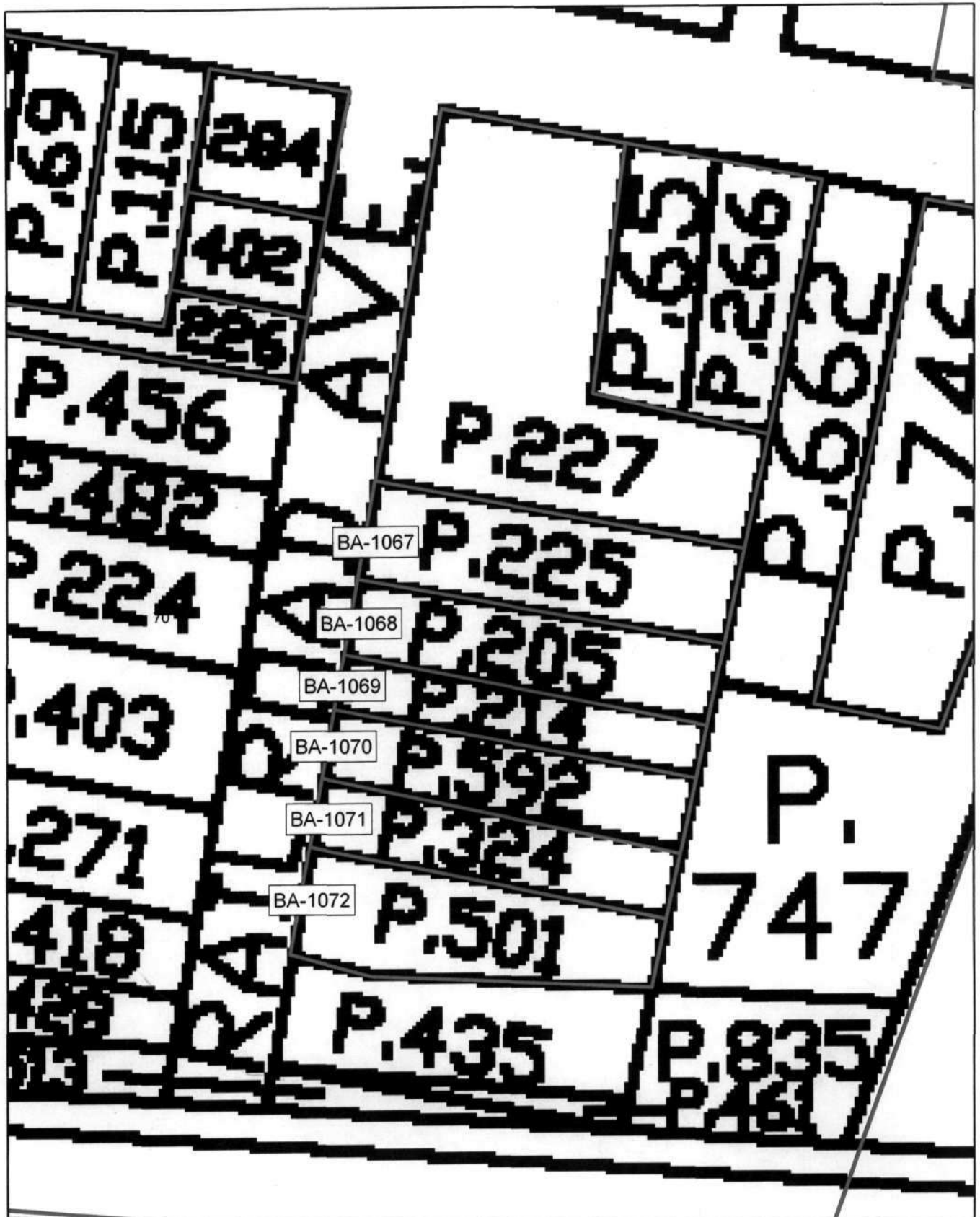
Seller: ST AMBROSE HOUSING AID CENTER INC	Date: 03/03/2006	Price: \$125,000
Type: NOT ARMS-LENGTH	Deed1: /23474/ 177	Deed2:
Seller: ST AMBROSE HOUSING AID CENTER INC	Date: 10/21/2004	Price: \$0
Type: NOT ARMS-LENGTH	Deed1: /20865/ 22	Deed2:
Seller:	Date:	Price:
Type:	Deed1:	Deed2:

Exemption Information

Partial Exempt Assessments	Class	07/01/2008	07/01/2009
County	000	0	0
State	000	0	0
Municipal	000	0	0

Tax Exempt: NO
Exempt Class:

Special Tax Recapture:
 * NONE *



East Towson: Planimetric Data



BA-1070
Name: House, 404 Railroad Avenue
East Towson
Baltimore County



Prepared by:
Baltimore County Office of Planning
401 Bosley Avenue
Towson, Maryland 21204
June, 2001



Scale

1 inch = 200 feet

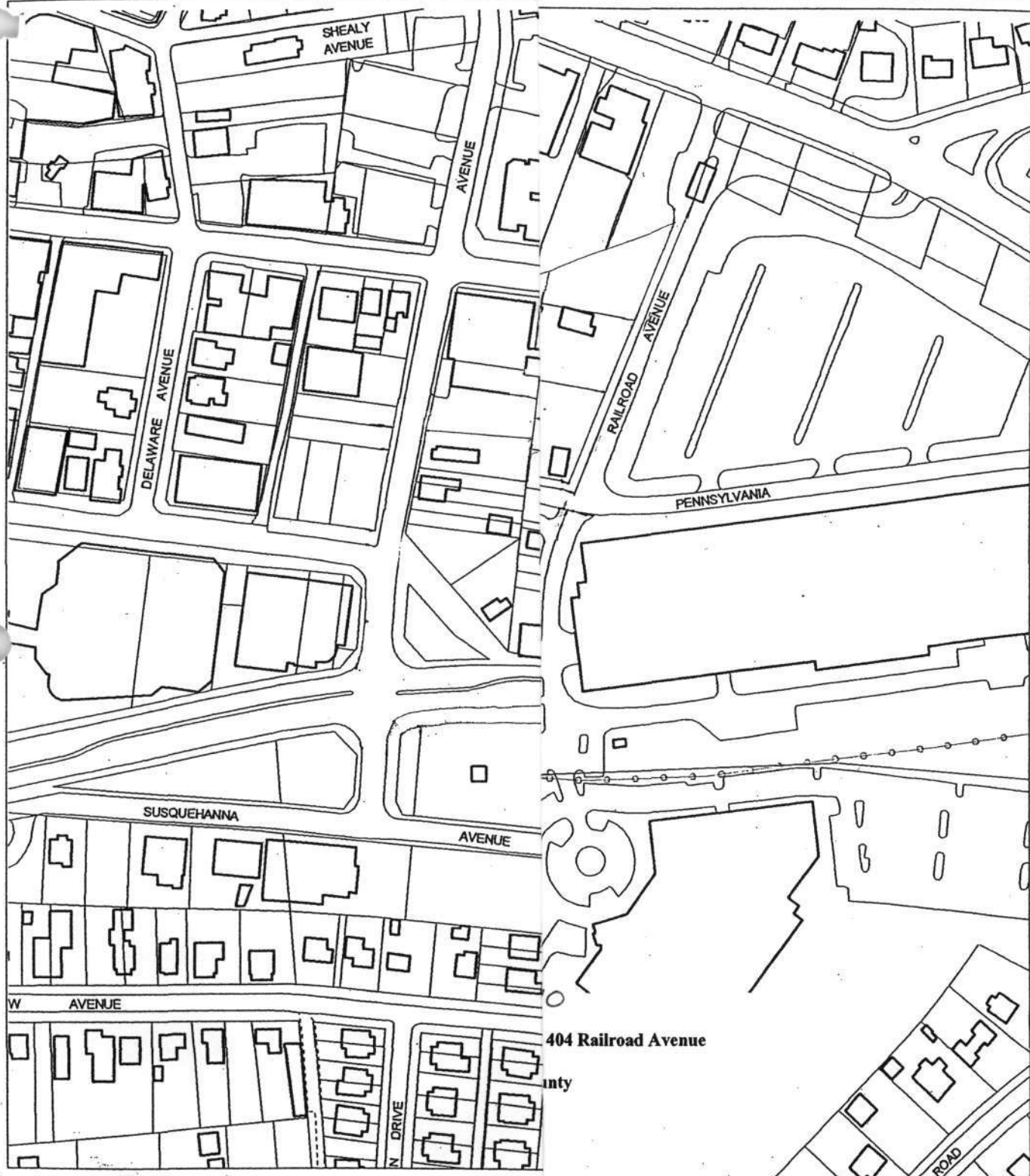
1:2400

100 0 100 200 Feet

Legend

- Study Area Boundary
- Paved Roads
- Unpaved Roads
- Paved Parking / Driveways
- Hydrographic Features
- Buildings
- Vegetation

Data Sources:
Planimetric Data: Baltimore County OIT GIS Services Unit (1:2400)
Parcel Boundaries: Baltimore County OIT GIS Services Unit (1:2400)
Study Area: Baltimore County Office of Planning (1:2400)
Coordinate System:
Maryland State Plane: NAD83/91 Horizontal Datum
Elevations in Feet: NAVD88 Vertical Datum
Date of Data Capture: March 1996
Scale of Data Capture: 1" = 100'

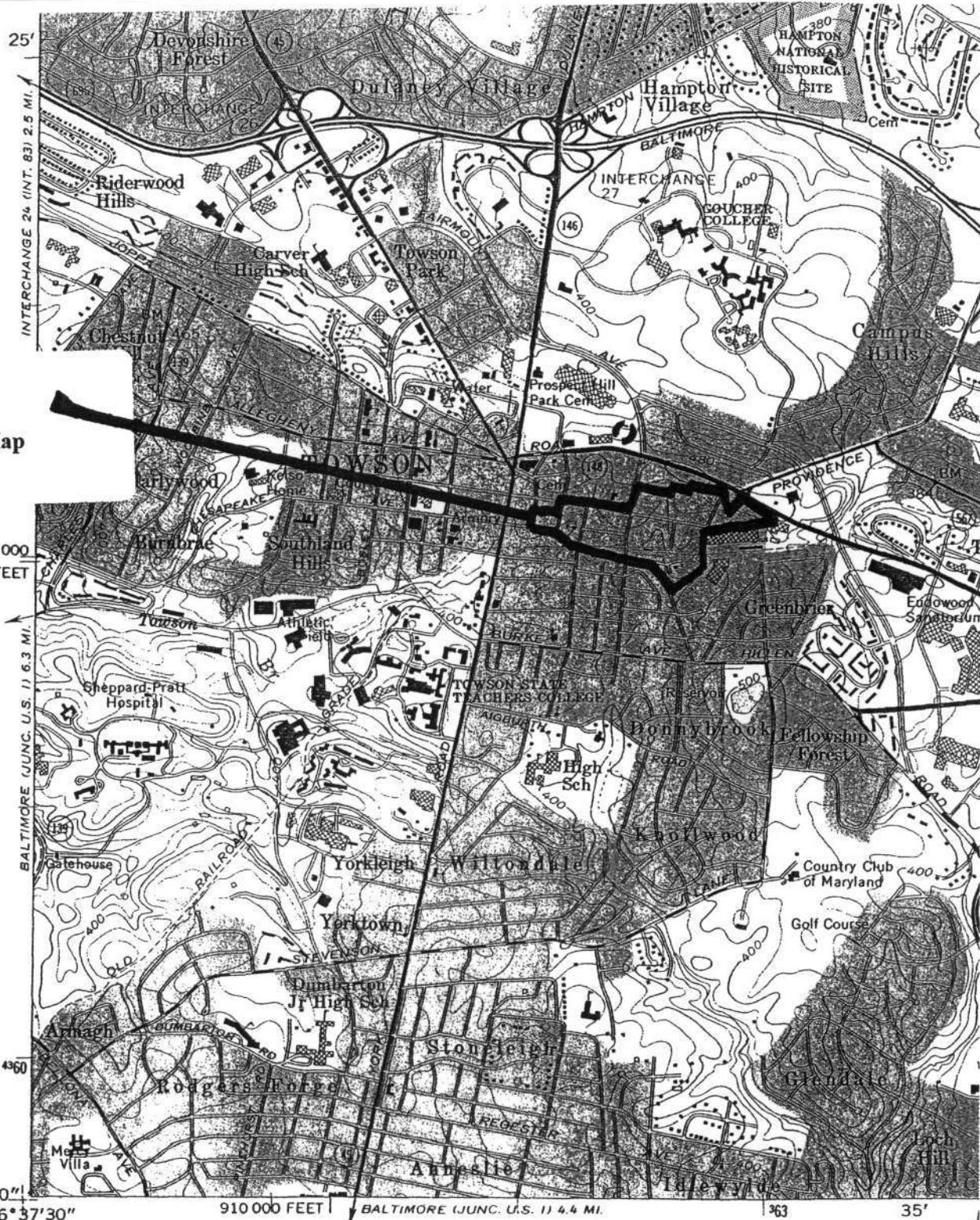


Prepared by:
Baltimore County Office of Planning
401 Bosley Avenue
Towson, Maryland 21204
June, 2001

Data Sources:
Planimetric Data: Baltimore County OIT GIS Services Unit (1:2400)
Parcel Boundaries: Baltimore County OIT GIS
Services Unit (1:2400)
Study Area: Baltimore County Office of Planning (1:2400)

Coordinate System:
Maryland State Plane: NAD83/91 Horizontal Datum
Elevations in Feet: NAVD88 Vertical Datum

Date of Data Capture: March 1996
Scale of Data Capture: 1" = 100'



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East Towson
Towson, Maryland
Towson USGS Quad Map
Baltimore County

(BALTIMORE WEST)
5662 SW

Mapped by the Army Map Service
Edited and published by the Geological Survey

Control by USGS, USC&GS, USCE, and Maryland
Bureau of Control Surveys and Maps

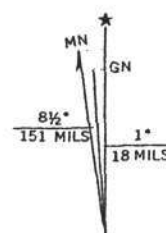
Culture and drainage in part compiled from aerial photographs
taken 1943. Topography by planetable surveys 1944
Culture revised by the Geological Survey 1957

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Maryland coordinate system
1000-metre Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 18, shown in blue

Red tint indicates areas in which only
landmark buildings are shown

Revisions shown in purple compiled by the Geological Survey from
aerial photographs taken 1966 and 1974. This information not
field checked

Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas



UTM GRID AND 1974 MAGNETIC NORTH
DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET



BA-1070

~~BA 1067~~

HOUSE, 404 RAILROAD AVENUE

BALTIMORE COUNTY, MD

TRAILERIES

10/2001

MD SHPO

NORTHWEST CORNER

1 of 3



BA-1070

~~BA-1067~~

HOUSE, 404 RAILROADS AVENUE

BALTIMORE COUNTY, MD

TRAILERIES

10/2001

MD SHPO

NORTHEAST CORNER

2 of 3



BA-1070

~~BA-1067~~

HOUSE, 404 RAILROAD AVENUE
BALTIMORE COUNTY, MD

TRACERIES

10/2001

MD-SHPO

SOUTHWEST CORNER

3 of 3

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC

THE BROWN HOUSE

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

404 Railroad Ave.

second

CITY, TOWN

Towson Md. 21204

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

VICINITY OF Baltimore

STATE

COUNTY

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT☐ BUILDING(S)☒ STRUCTURE☐ SITE☐ OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

☐ PUBLIC☒ PRIVATE☐ BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESS☐ BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

☒ OCCUPIED☐ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

☐ YES: RESTRICTED☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED☐ NO

PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE☐ COMMERCIAL☐ EDUCATIONAL☐ ENTERTAINMENT☐ GOVERNMENT☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ MILITARY☐ MUSEUM☐ PARK☒ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☐ RELIGIOUS☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ TRANSPORTATION☐ OTHER**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Margaret A. Brown

Telephone #:

STREET & NUMBER

404 Railroad Ave.

CITY, TOWN

Towson Md. 21204

STATE, zip code

VICINITY OF

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Baltimore County Courthouse

Liber #:

Folio #: 3501/269

STREET & NUMBER

401 Bosley Ave.

CITY, TOWN

Towson Md. 21204

STATE

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

BA-1070 - 404 Railroad

before 1915

This frame duplex is two-stories high, three bays wide, and four bays deep. The gable end of the brown-shingled house faces the street.

7 DESCRIPTION

BA-1070

CONDITION

☐ EXCELLENT
☒ GOOD
☐ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED
☐ RUINS
☐ UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

☒ UNALTERED
☐ ALTERED

CHECK ONE

☐ ORIGINAL SITE
☐ MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

404 Railroad

This early 19th century house is three bays wide, four long bays deep, and two stories tall. Its wooden frame is covered with brown wooden shingles. The western gable end faces the street. On this facade, a transomed door occupies the north bay, while two 2/2 floor-to-ceiling windows occupy the other two bays on the first floor. 1/1 windows appear in the three second floor bays. Every bay on each floor along the south side contains a window. A two-story addition along the east, or rear, has a screened semi-enclosed porch on the second floor. An outhouse addition projects east of the eastern most bay on the south side.

The floor plan of the house begins at the west with a stair hall to the north and a parlor to the south. The stair's turned newel post is followed by turned balusters. The architraves consist of a small ogee to either side of a central flat section. The moldings meet in mitered corners rather than in corner blocks.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

8 SIGNIFICANCE**PERIOD****AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW**

<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES**BUILDER/ARCHITECT****STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

Early deeds indicate that John Finn leased the property to Susan Gray for five years in 1892. Susan Gray resided at the Brown House until 1942, whereupon the property was conveyed to Helen Roberts. Helen Roberts later sold the property to the R. S. Construction Co. Three years later (1945) the R. S. Construction Co. sold the land to Harrison Quickley and wife. The Quickley family lived in the house for five years (March 1950) at which time the property was conveyed to Lilliam A. Kelly. Harrison Quickley redeemed the property in 1956 and later conveyed the property to the present owner Margaret A. Brown. According to deeds Harrison Quickley lost the property and redeemed the property three times before he finally sold the property to Margaret Brown.

This property is an example of the struggle that the disadvantaged encountered while trying to hold on to the only thing that they could really call their own.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Marcus E. Pollock/coordinator Merry Stinson/architect

7/77

ORGANIZATION

Committee to Save E. Towson

DATE

823-8870

STREET & NUMBER

600 W. Chesapeake Ave.

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Towson Md. 21204

STATE

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 267-1438



BA-1070
Brown House
404 R.R. Ave.
Towson, Md.
west

Merry Stinson
1977